

## December 2008 News to Use

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### Assessment Policy

As you may recall, in May 2005 representatives from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), met with KYAE staff and visited programs in Jefferson and Fayette counties. This was a targeted monitoring visit to review data collection and reporting through the AERIN system.

**As a result of the visit, OVAE required KYAE to:**

- **Revise its Assessment Policy to include publisher recommendations for the time interval between pre- and post-testing (changes announced in [12/18/2008 e-mail](#)).**
- Include an accommodated testing section in the Assessment Policy (effective July 1, 2006).
- Discontinue the use of the A-LAS assessment (effective July 1, 2006).
- Revise AERIN so that assessment scores automatically populate the NRS functional level and determine if an educational gain has been made (effective July 1, 2005).
- Collect daily student contact hours (effective July 1, 2005).

More information can be read in the [June 2005](#) and [September 2005](#) issues of *News to Use*.

Four of the five policy changes listed above have since been approved by OVAE then communicated to the field and implemented. However, revising the assessment policy to include recommendations for the time interval between pre-and post-testing has been an ongoing process with OVAE. KYAE was permitted over the last two years to pre- and post-test before the test publisher's recommended 60 hours by using an exceptions form. At the end of each fiscal year, KYAE analyzed the exceptions data and sent OVAE a report detailing the questions raised by OVAE concerning our assessment policies and procedures.

Eager to obtain final approval of our assessment policy and close this issue with OVAE, KYAE submitted end of fiscal year 2007-08 exceptions data and a brief analysis. KYAE informed OVAE that while it appears the number of students granted exceptions to post-test prior to 60 hours has increased, KYAE has seen an increase in the average hours of attendance. Kentucky's average hours of attendance has steadily increased from 49 in fiscal year 2005-06 to 62 in fiscal year 2007-08. However, KYAE was recently informed by OVAE that we would no longer be permitted to continue pre- and post-testing students with less than the recommended time intervals between pre- and post-testing. OVAE felt strongly that our data indicated the following: a practice effect (97% of the students post-tested with less than 60 hours made a level completion), exceptions have become the norm (47% of those with a pre-and post-test were granted an exception) and there was a significant increase (229%) in the number of students post-tested with as few as 12-30 hours from fiscal year 2006-07 to fiscal year 2007-08.

KYAE was then charged with developing an assessment plan that complied with the test publisher's guidelines to be submitted to OVAE. In developing the assessment post-testing policy, KYAE first examined several states assessment policy, assessment data and then had additional conversations with OVAE. The following assessment policy was submitted and approved by OVAE pending end of fiscal year 2008-09 data. Please read carefully because the policy that KYAE developed is slightly different than the recommended test publisher's guidelines for the TABE assessment.

Implementing the new assessment policy may require new strategies for assisting students in reaching their goals. Therefore, KYAE staff is working to develop several toolkits that will provide innovative strategies to assist programs in reaching the 50 hour instructional period before post-assessment. Currently, KYAE staff is in the process of identifying research-based strategies to increase retention, replicable recruitment models, and best practices for intake, orientation and assessment. The toolkits containing retention strategies, recruitment models and intake, orientation and assessment best practices will be disseminated spring 2009.

**Click here to view the [new assessment policy](#) effective January 1, 2009. Please note, there are [two post-assessment policies](#) an (1) interim post-assessment policy for the**

remainder of the current fiscal year beginning January 1, 2009 and (2) the final assessment policy for post-testing effective next fiscal year beginning July 1, 2009. A new [Exception Form](#) is posted on the KYAE Web site for use beginning January 1, 2009.

There are no post-assessment exceptions for BEST Literacy, BEST Plus, CASAS or WorkKeys.

### **BEST Literacy and BEST Plus**

- Recommended timeframes for pre- and post-testing as issued by OVAE ([NRS Web site](#), pp. 6-8):
  - “60 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended.”

### **CASAS**

- Recommended timeframes for pre- and post-testing as issued by OVAE ([NRS Web site](#), pp. 6-8):
  - “70-100 hours (40 hours is the minimum).”

### **WorkKeys**

- Recommended timeframes for pre- and post-testing as issued by OVAE ([NRS Web site](#), pp. 6-8):
  - “We [ACT/WorkKeys] typically recommend that the student be involved in regular instruction that is offered by the institution. This would amount to a semester or quarter course.”

If you have questions, please contact David Walters at [David.Walters@ky.gov](mailto:David.Walters@ky.gov) or (502) 573-5114, extension 122.

### **KYAE Program Director Council**

The KYAE Advisory Committee has been renamed and is now the [KYAE Program Director Council](#). The Program Director Council will serve as a key group called together for the purpose of consulting, discussing and counseling KYAE on adult education policy and issues affecting the entire state system and to respond to requests from KYAE for such direction.

### **Research Briefs**

On the [KYAE Web site](#), two new research briefs are posted. The first brief provides a profile of the 2006-07 and 2007-08 GED graduates. The second brief analyzes GED graduates transitioning to postsecondary education.

## **AERIN Data**

KYAE will be analyzing the first and second quarter performance data in mid-January 2009. In order to provide you with the most current results, please have all of your data entered into AERIN by January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The performance analysis will be in the January *News to Use*. A preliminary glance at the performance data looks promising, level completions are at 44 percent as of December 19, 2008.

## **WIN Update**

The online WIN program will be updated in January to include a full screen window and upgraded graphics. You will be able to download PDF files of the WIN curriculum to use with students. The new version of WIN will require the Flash plug-in rather than Authorware. If you are running PLATO, you already have Flash installed on your computers. If not, the Flash plug-in is available at <http://www.kyvae.org/educator/techupdates.asp>.

## **GED Information**

### Student Addresses for GED Testing

Passing results are mailed to the students at the address entered on the GED123.org record. Changing the student's address in AERIN, on the KYAE-6 form, etc. will not update the GED123.org address. Please remind students to inform the examiner at the time of testing if there has been a change of address since the GED123.org record was established.

### Social Security Numbers

Programs should verify each student's social security number when the student is enrolled. It is easy to transpose digits. Please have the student confirm their social security number entered in AERIN. Remind the student that the SSN is the link to their educational record and it must be accurate.

### Kentucky Psychological Association Learning Disability Assessments

KYAE and the Kentucky Psychological Association have joined forces to assist with learning disability assessments for GED accommodations. The two agencies jointly issued a request for pro bono or sliding scale assessments and twenty psychologists around the state have responded. Because the psychologists were asked to do only 3-4 assessments a year, requests will be screened. If you have a student that needs

accommodations, but does not have documentation in an individual educational plan or cannot qualify for Office of Vocational Rehabilitation assessment, please contact Rae Smith at [Rae.Smith@ky.gov](mailto:Rae.Smith@ky.gov) or B. J. Helton at [BJ.Helton@ky.gov](mailto:BJ.Helton@ky.gov). Rae or B.J. will contact the psychologists in your area. Students should be an average to high reader; adaptations have proven successful, regularly attendance to class and the students has the cognitive ability to pass the GED Tests.

### SSN Already in System

You may be receiving the following error message on GED132.org “SSN already in use”. This is because the examinee has previously tested. Please ask each examinee before they attempt to create a record on GED123.org “Have you taken the GED Tests anytime since 1985?” The second page of the GED123.org instructions deals with those retesting. These examinees do not create a GED123.org record. The examiner is notified and the examinee will complete the demographic form to be scanned. The examinee will need a signed KYAE-6 form and testing misconduct form.

### GED Demographic Form State Specific Questions

Please make sure that each student completing the demographic form has a list of questions that can be omitted or simplified and the list of state specific questions which are answered Yes or No in blocks 30-39.

## **KET Partnership**

Boost your enrollment with the KYAE/KET Partnership registration. This program alternative meets the need of any student who has a problem regularly attending your center. Students:

- Are pre-tested and enrolled at your center and come as often as they can
- Watch KET programs at home and study in KET workbooks
- Complete workbook lessons and your center counts this as instructional time
- Are determined as GED test ready after you administer the OPT
- Get a GED voucher to pay the GED Exam fee after passing the OPT
- Student pays \$20 up front (workbooks follow to their home), then \$20 more when you determine they are ready for the GED

Partnership process and information, registration forms, GED broadcast schedule are found at: <http://kyae.ky.gov/educators/forms.htm> .

**New at KET:** Streaming video series for GED Connection, Pre-GED Connection,

Workplace Essential Skills and TV411 are available for free to your students at [www.ket.org/fastforward/kentucky](http://www.ket.org/fastforward/kentucky). Students can watch whenever they want as long as they have either cable or a DSL internet connection.

## **Grants for Instructional Material Available**

**Applications are now being accepted for grants from the Charles Evans Book Fund!**

**The Charles Evans Book Fund** is a special program of ProLiteracy's National Book Fund®, a program that supplies local programs with adult literacy and basic education curricula and materials. The Charles Evans Book Fund, dedicated to improving the lives of people who are homeless, was established with a generous grant from the Charles Evans Foundation in honor of the life and philanthropy of the late Charles Evans.

Non-profit organizations that provide adult literacy or basic education services for people **who are homeless** are eligible to apply for a Charles Evans Book Fund grant from ProLiteracy. Grants typically range between \$3,000 and \$8,000, but may be smaller or larger depending on the needs of the applicant organization. Grants are in the form of vouchers for teaching materials and products from ProLiteracy's publishing division, New Readers Press.

In addition to literacy instructional and reading materials, New Readers Press also produces many materials to help individuals with life skills such as applying for a job, parenting, obtaining a driver's license, and others.

**Applications are now being accepted by mail** and must be postmarked no later than **January 23, 2009** to be considered. For grant guidelines, applications and additional information, please visit, <http://www.proliteracy.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=484&srcid=191>.